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THE BELIEF IN GOD AND IMMORTALITY. By James H. Leuba.
 Boston: Sherman French and Company, 1916. Pp. xvii, 340.

This volume offers (1) a brief discussion of the origin and nature of the belief in immortality; (2) the results of a statistical study concerning beliefs in immortality and in a personal God; (3) thoughts as to the utility of such beliefs.

Professor Leuba points out a distinction between primitive and modern beliefs in immortality. The primitive belief is the result of various experiences which the author calls perceptual. Among these are exteriorized memory images, "sense of presence," dreams, visions, the natural endlessness of man, vegetation and insect metamorphoses, reflections, and echoes. The modern belief arose as a result of the "breaking down of the national hope and pride, the appearance of the individualistic spirit and of personal relations with the gods, taken in connection with the prolongation of the spiritual greatness of man" (p. 113). "The modern belief in immortality is conceived of a fulfillment of a man's most precious ideals." Professor Leuba thinks of the primitive belief as an unavoidable interpretation of facts directly perceived which have no moral significance (p. 123). The modern belief is the creation of desire. The one ends in a repulsive condition which is to be avoided, while the other works toward a condition of blessed perfection.

This work of Professor Leuba is especially instructive in that it overcomes the objectionable tendency discernible in recent literature, of making too close an association between the modern and the primitive man. In such a phenomenon as a belief in immortality it is very easy to confuse entirely different beliefs because the idea of continuity is common to them. It is very easy to forget that very diverse conditions bring about diverse attitudes in people.

Professor Leuba concludes that so far there are no sufficient metaphysical or scientific grounds for the belief in immortality.

The statistical part of the book consists of the presentations of results obtained from a study of the prevalence of the belief by the questionnaire method. A sample statement which was to be affirmed or denied is "I believe in personal immortality for all men." The questionnaire was answered by (a) college students (9 colleges), (b) students in a single institution, and (c) scientists, historians, sociologists, and psychologists (about 750 in all). A summarizing chart "shows that in any class of persons investi-

gated the number of believers in God is less than the number of non-believers, and that the number of believers in immortality is somewhat larger than in a personal God." The charts show that among the more distinguished scientists and other distinguished men, unbelief is much more frequent than among the less distinguished. The author accepts these results at their face value, disregarding the fact that there is no attempt to define the terms used. Under the circumstances one might expect a great variation in the meanings attached to these terms. It is clear that these results show merely that the general tendency seems to be toward a decrease in the belief in God and immortality whatever they may be. There are no indications as to precisely what is believed concerning the matters in question. Some might believe fervently in the things which others do not believe in, and yet all might report no belief. The difficulty in finding out what is believed is brought out in the fact that Professor Leuba was unable to obtain usable material from the philosophers. They seemed to insist too much upon knowing the meanings attached to the terms used.

The author accounts for the results on the basis of greater moral and intellectual freedom in the unbelievers. This would be a suitable explanation did the facts indicate a rejection of such beliefs because of a critical examination of them, but, unfortunately, such facts are lacking.

Respecting the ethical situation, Professor Leuba believes that a science of ethics which requires immortality would be quite unsafely supported. The final implication is that the belief in immortality serves no useful purpose in our present civilization.

The reader of this study can but be impressed with the fact that in this book is discussed with the fair spirit of critical inquiry a subject that in recent literature has been even unscrupulously handled.

J. R. KANTOR.

THE SPIRITUAL ASCENT OF MAN. By W. Tudor Jones, D. Phil., with an Introduction by A. L. Smith, M.A., Master of Balliol College, Oxford. London: University of London Press; Published for the Press Company by Hodder & Stoughton, 1916. Pp. xii, 241. Price, 5s. net.

One of our greatest English thinkers said some few years ago that as long as English writers on religion declined to be in earnest